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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Fortieth session
11-22 March 1996
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

Statement submitted by International Alliance of Women - Equal Rights, Equal Responsibilities, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International, Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category I; and All India Women's Conference, Arab Lawyers Union, World Federation of Methodist Women (WFMW) and World Federation for Mental Health, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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1. At this important fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the above-mentioned organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, call the attention of the Commission to the fact that 1996 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the coming into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the above organizations, therefore, support the timely drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention at this session of the Commission, which has been so supportive, as an appropriate mechanism to strengthen the Convention and to give further voice to women, as they seek redress against discrimination.

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* E/CN.6/1996/1.

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2. As part of the outreach of the Working Group on Equality of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, our organizations have also committed themselves to working together through our affiliates at the local level to:

(a) Make the Convention more widely known;

(b) Achieve universal ratification and implementation of the Convention without reservations. We believe reservations often negate the value of the Convention itself; and the value of the years of work spent in the formulation of the Convention, in which the Commission participated so effectively.

3. Every effort is being made to secure wider support for this action.